

*THE WIDOWED
FLAMEN*

Evidently further, the learned Roman antiquary Aulus Gellius quotes from "the books of the priests of the Roman people" (the highest possible authority on the subject) and from "many ancient speeches marriage" of a list of old Roman deities, in which there seem to be at least five pairs of males and females.¹ More than that he proves conclusively by quotations from Plautus, the annalist Cn. Gellius, and Licinius Imbrex that these old writers certainly regarded one at least of the pairs (Mars and Neria) as husband and wife;² and we have good ancient evidence for viewing in the same light three others of the pairs. Thus the old annalist and antiquarian L. Cincius Alimentus, who fought against Hannibal and was captured by him, affirmed in his work on the Roman calendar that Maia was the wife of Vulcan;³ and as there was a Flamen of Vulcan, who sacrificed to Maia on May Day,⁴ it is reasonable to suppose that he was assisted in the ceremony by a Flaminica, his wife, just as on my hypothesis the Flamen Dialis was assisted by his wife the Flaminica. Another old Roman historian, L. Calpurnius Piso, who wrote in the second century B.C., said that the name of Vulcan's wife was not Maia but

was not a god of death and the dead; he was simply a personified oath (*op:os*; see Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 804 "Ο]ΚΟΙ> 7€(j/6,ae^oy, TOP "Epts re^e ΤΤ?}"/, eiriopKois), an abstract idea which makes no figure in Greek mythology and religion. That such a rare and thin Greek abstraction should through a gross misunderstanding be transformed into a highly popular Roman god of death, who not

only passed muster with the people but was admitted by the pontiffs themselves to the national pantheon and honoured by them with a solemn ritual, is in the last degree improbable.

¹ Aulus Gellius, xiii. 23 (22), I sg.^g ⁶ *Conprecationes deum inmortalium^ qttae ritit, Romano fimit^ expositae simt in libris sacerdotitm populi JRomani et in plerisque antiquis orationibis. In his scributum est: Lit*

*am Satitmi,
Salaciam Ncptuni,
Horam Quiring
Virites Quiring
Maiam Vokani[^]
Pleriem Junonis[^]*
Moles Martis Nerienque Martis" As to this list see Mr. W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic* (London, 1899), pp. 60-62; ztf., *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London, 1911), pp. 150[^]., 481 sqq. He holds (p. 485) that the feminine names Salacia, etc., do not designate goddesses, the wives of the gods, but that they "indicate functions or attributes of the male deity to whom they are attached."

- Aulus Gellius, xiii. 23 (22), n- 16.

³ Macrobius, *Saturn*, i. 12. 18,
"Cingins mensem [laiimi] nominatum putat a Maia.) quam Vukani dicit nxoreni argumento que ititur quod flamen Vukanalis Ka Undis Mails huic dcae rem divinam facit: sed Piso uxorem Vulcani Majestam[^] no n Maiam, didt vocari" The work of Cincius (Cingius) is mentioned by Macrobius in the same chapter (§ 12₃ "Civgths in eo libro quern de fastis reliquit"). As to the life and writings of this old annalist and antiquary see M. Schanz, *Geschichte der romischen Litteratur?* i. (Munich, 1898), p. 128; G. Wissowa, Miinzer, and Cichorius, s.v. "Cincius," in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realencyclopddie der klassischen Altertums-wissenschaft*, iii. 2555 sqq. All these writers distinguish the old annalist from the antiquary, whom they take to have been a later writer of the same name. But the distinction appears to be purely arbitrary and destitute of any ancient authority.

⁴ Macrobius, *Saturn*, i. 12. 18.

See the preceding note.